

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 200001 TOSEC 090055  
ORIGIN SS-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 /016 R

66011

DRAFTED BY NEA:JCOLLINS

APPROVED BY NEA:JCOLLINS

S/S-O:RCASTRODALE

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O 082015Z AUG 78 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY NIACT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 200001 TOSEC 090055

EXDIS FOR SAUNDERS FROM NEA

FOL RPT USUN NEW YORK 03136 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO AMMAN  
BEIRUT DAMASCUS JERUSALEM TEL AVIV 8 AUG 78 QUOTE

S E C R E T USUN NEW YORK 03136

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS NIACT IMMEDIATE TO SECRETARY'S  
PARTY FOR SAUNDERS

E.O.11652:GDS

TAGS: MOPS, MARR, XF, LE, SY, US

SUBJECT: SYRIAN UN PERMREP ON THE SITUATION IN  
BEIRUT

SUMMARY: SYRIAN PERMREP CHOUFI DISCUSSED THE SITUATION  
IN BEIRUT WITH AMBASSADOR LEONARD AUGUST 8, OUTLINING  
HIS VIEWS ON THE MAIN ELEMENTS OF A POSSIBLE SOLUTION.  
HE STRONGLY URGED THAT THE SECRETARY DISCUSS BEIRUT  
PROBLEM DIRECTLY WITH ASSAD IN DAMASCUS. END SUMMARY.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 200001 TOSEC 090055

1. WITHDRAWAL OF SYRAIN ARMY FROM BEIRUT.

CHOUFI BELIEVES IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE SYRIAN ARMY TO  
WITHDRAW TO NEW POSITIONS OUTSIDE OF BEIRUT AND FUNCTION  
AGAIN AS AN ARMY RATHER THAN AS A POLICE FORCE. LEONARD  
NOTED REPORTS OF GOL CONCERN THAT SUCH WITHDRAWAL WOULD

OPEN WAY TO FUL-SCALE FIGHTING BETWEEN CHRISTIANS AND PALESTINIANS IN THE CITY. CHOUFI REPLIED THAT SYRIAN ARM COULD BE DEPLOYED CLOSE TO PALESTINIAN CAMPS IN SUCH A WAY AS TO LIMIT THE DANGER OF PALESTINIANS TAKING THE OFFENSIVE AGAINST THE CHRISTINAS.

2. NEED FOR NEW LEBANESE GOVERNMENT.

ONCE THE SYRIANS PULL BACK, CHOUFI CONTINUED, IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE TO ESTABLISH A NEW LEBANESE GOVERNMENT. THE SARKIS GOVERNMENT, ESSENTIALLY TECHNICAL IN NATURE AND TO LIMITED IN COMPOSITION, CLEARLY WAS NOT ABLE TO MASTER TH SITUATION. THE NEW GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE TO BE BROADLY BASED SO THAT ALL THE MAJOR ELEMENTS AND FACTORS ARE BROUGHT INTO THE DEVELOPMENT OF A POLITICAL SOLUTION. EITHER AT THE MINISTERIAL OR SUB-CABINET LEVEL IT WOULD HAVE TO INCLUDE SUCH PERSONALITIES AS CHAMOUN, GEMAYEL, JUMBLATT, TUENI AND OTHERS. THE MAIN POINT WAS TO ESTABLISH A POLITICAL ARRANGEMENT WHICH ON THE ONE HAN WOULD ASSURE THE CHRISTIANS THAT THEY WOULD NOT BE DES- TROYED BY THE MOSLEMS AND ON THE OTHER HAND ASSURE THE SUNNIS THAT THEY WILL NOT BE DOMINATED BY THE CHRISTIANS.

3. US ROLE.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 200001 TOSEC 090055

AFTER COMPLETING THIS BRIEF ANALYSIS, CHOUFI TOLD LEONARD THAT IN HIS VIEW ONLY TWO COUNTRIES COULD PUSH THE PARTIE IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION -- THE UNITED STATES AND SAUDI ARABIA. THE SECRETARY COULD PLAY A VERY IMPORTANT ROLE AT THIS JUCTURE BY DISCUSSING THE SITUATION IN BEIRU DIRECTLY WITH ASSAD. (HE WARNED OF KHADDAM'S NEGATIVE IMPACT ON ANY PROPOSALS PASSED THROUGH HIM). HE HOPED THE US UNDERSTOOD THAT SYRIA'S OBJECTIVES IN LEBANON WERE LIMITED TO THE RESTORATION OF A STABLE AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT AND THAT SYRIA DID NOT ASPIRE TO TAKE OVER LEBANON. AS REGARDS INTER-ARAB POLITICS, SAUDI ARABIAN SUPPORT WAS ESSENTIAL FOR ANY VIABLE SOLUTION. THE SAUDIS SPEAK FOR THE SUNNIS IN LEBANON AND CLEARLY HAVE GREAT INFLUENCE.

4. LEONARD WILL BE DISCUSSING THE BEIRUT SITUATION FURTHER WITH CHOUFI ON AUGUST 9 AND WOULD APPRECIATE ANY COMMENTS OR REACTIONS DEPARTMENT MIGHT WISH TO PASS TO HIM. YOUNG

UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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## Message Attributes

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**TAGS:** MOPS, MARR, XF, LE, SY, US  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014